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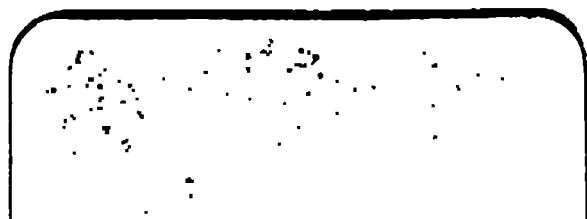
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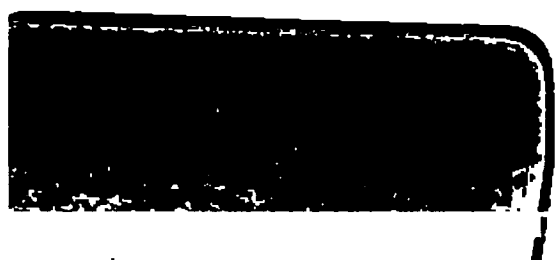
CIOUS STONES

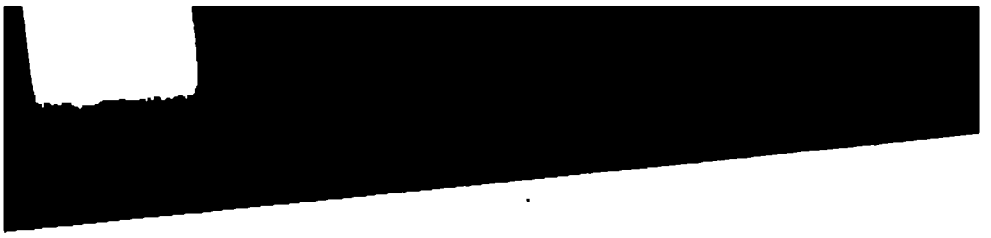
RUBIES

NATURE











PRECIOUS STONES

COLLECTED BY

H. L. SIDNEY LEAR

[c-191.]

Precious Stones.

RUBIES

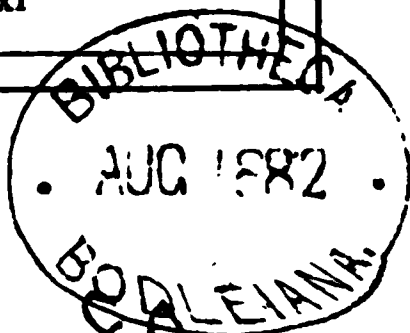
NATURE

'These be rubies, fairies' favours.'

RIVINGTONS

Waterloo Place, London

MDCCCLXXXI



141. n. 80.



1



*Rubies have living fires . . .
Their prisoned souls are throbbing like my
own.
Perchance they loved once, were ambitious,
proud ;
Or do they only dream of wider life,
Ache from intenseness, gleam to burst the
wall
Compact of crystal splendour, and to flood
Some wider space with glory? Poor, poor
gems !
We must be patient in our prisonhouse,
And find our space in loving. . . .*





Rubies.

I.

NATURE has two great revelations—that of use and that of beauty; and the first thing we observe about these two characteristics of her is that they are bound together, and tied to each other. It would not be true, indeed, to say that use was universally accompanied by beauty;—still, upon that immense scale upon which nature is beautiful, it is beautiful by the self-same material and laws by

*Use and
Beauty.*

10	Rabies.
Use and Beauty.	<p>which she is useful. The beauty of nature is not, as it were, a fortunate accident, which can be separated from her use ; there is no difference in the tenure upon which these two characteristics stand ; the beauty is just as much a part of nature as the use ; they are only different aspects of the self-same facts. Take a gorgeous sunset ;—what is the substance of it ? only a combination of atmospheric laws—laws of light and heat ; the same laws by which we are enabled to live, see, and breathe. But the solid means of life constitute also a rich sight ; the usefulness on one side is on the other beauty. It is not that the mechanism is painted over in order to disguise the deformity of machinery ; but the machinery is itself the painting ; the useful laws compose the spectacle. All the colours of the landscape, the tints of spring ; autumn, the hues of twilight and</p>

Rubies.

11

dawn—all that might seem the superfluities of Nature, are only her most necessary operations under another view ; her ornament is but another aspect of her work ; and in the very act of labouring as a machine, she also sleeps as a picture. So in the sphere of space—the same hills which serve as the measure of distance to regulate all our motions, also make the beauty of perspective.—J. B. MOZLEY.

*Use and
Beauty.*

II.

FLIES and fleas are extremely troublesome, but they do not torture us ; they only call for some endurance, scarcely for patience—so great a grace is hardly required for so trifling an annoyance. Some people have so thin-skinned a conscience that every little failing vexes them ; and then they are vexed at having been vexed, with a more vexing vexation than before. All

*Trouble-
some
trifles*

*Trouble-
some
trifles.*

this has its root in a self-love which is the more difficult to cure by reason of its being so secret. Mischief which is easily perceived is half-cured. — ST. FRANCIS DE SALES.

*Symbol-
ism.*

III.

EVERYTHING in the world is in some sort symbolical of some greater, truer existence of the higher world. The outer world therefore in Holy Scripture is apparently called "the lie" (Rom. i. 25). The archetypal verity is constantly called the True. The kingdom of Christ is the Truth; Christ is the True Light, the True Vine; *i.e.* that which is symbolised in the outer world by the Light and the Vine. In taking symbolical titles to Himself, Christ is not merely adapting to Himself a name which has its primary meaning in some lower phenomenon of the outer world. On

the contrary, He is giving us the spiritual key to nature, so that when we see the material object, our heart may recognise the spiritual object which it indicates.—R. M. BENSON.

*Symbol-
ism.*

IV.

WONDERFUL, in universal adaptation to man's need, desire, and discipline, God's daily preparation of the earth for him with beautiful means of life ! First a carpet to make it soft for him ; then a coloured fantasy of embroidery thereon ; then tall spreading of foliage to shade him from sun-heat, and shade also the fallen rain, that it may not dry quickly back into the clouds, but stay to nourish the springs among the moss ; stout wood to bear this leafage—easily to be cut, yet tough and light, to make houses for him, or instruments (lance-shaft or plough-handle, according to his tem-

*He
maketh
it very
beauti-
ful.*

Rubies.

14

*He
maketh
it very
beauti-
ful.*

per); useless if it had been harder ; useless if less fibrous ; useless if less elastic. Winter comes, and the shade of leafage falls away to let the sun warm the earth ; the strong boughs remain, breaking the strength of winter winds. The seeds which are to prolong the race, innumerable according to the need, are made beautiful and palatable, varied into infinitude of appeal to the fancy of man, or provision for his service ; cold juice, or flowing spice, or balm, or incense, softening oil, preserving resin, medicine of styptic, febrifuge, or lulling charm ; and all these presented in forms of endless change. Fragility or force, softness and strength, in all degrees and aspects ; unerring uprightness, as of temple pillars, or unguided wanderings of feeble tendrils on the ground ; mighty resistances of rigid arm and limb to the storms of ages, or wavings

Rubies.

15

to and fro with faintest pulse of summer streamlet ; roots cleaving the strength of rock, or binding the transience of the sand ; crests basking in sunshine of the desert, or hiding by dripping spring and lightless cave ; foliage far tossing in entangled fields beneath every wave of ocean—clothing with variegated, everlasting films the peaks of the trackless mountains, or ministering at cottage doors, to every gentlest passion and simplest joy of humanity.—J. RUSKIN.

*He
maketh
it very
beauti-
ful.*

V.

GOING by railroad I do not consider as travelling at all ; it is merely “being sent” to a place, and very little different from becoming a parcel.—J. RUSKIN.

*Volens
volens.*

VI.

A GENTLE word soothes anger just as water puts out fire, and

*The soft
answer.*

16	Rubies.
<i>The soft answer.</i>	<p>there is no soil so barren but that tenderness brings forth some fruit. Who can be angry with those whose only weapons are pearls and diamonds? Nothing is so bitter as unripe fruit, but when preserved it is sweet and palatable. So reproof is naturally bitter, but mixed with the sugar of kindness, and heated by the fire of charity, it becomes cordial, gracious, and acceptable.—ST. FRANCIS DE SALES.</p>
<i>Verba pauca.</i>	<p>VII. SPEECH is silver, silence is golden.</p>
<i>Lignum vitæ.</i>	<p>VIII. ON either side of the river was there the Tree of Life. This was no earthly river, else how could the Tree at once have grown on this side of it and on that? But this blessed Tree does grow—does yield fruits on either side of the river of death ; which is in-</p>

Rubies.

17

deed, to God's servants, the River of the Water of Life. It yields them to us travellers in the way, on this side of the river; it yields them on that side the river to those, the saints, at home in their Country. On this side you must sit down under the shadow of that Tree;—on the other it casts no shadow, and why? Because there is no sun, according to that saying of Isaiah's,—“The sun shall be no more thy light by day: neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee.”—
J. M. NEALE.

*Lignum
vita.*

IX.

LIFE is short, and it is wearing fast away. We lose a great deal of time, and we want short roads to heaven, though the right road is in truth far shorter than we believe.—
FABER.

*Per an-
gustam
portam.*

*Frequent
commu-
nion.*

X.

IF men of the world ask why you communicate so often, tell them that it is that you may learn to love God; that you may be cleansed from imperfections, set free from trouble, comforted in affliction, strengthened in weakness. Tell them there are two manner of men who need frequent communion,—those who are perfect, since being ready they were much to blame did they not come to the Source and Fountain of all perfection; and the imperfect, that they may learn how to become perfect: the strong, lest they become weak; and the weak, that they may become strong; the sick that they may be healed, and the sound, lest they sicken. Tell them that you, imperfect, weak and ailing, need frequently to communicate with your Perfection, your Strength, your Phy-

Rubies.

19

sician. Tell them that those who are but little engaged in worldly affairs should communicate often, because they have leisure; and those who are heavily pressed with business, because they stand in need of so much help, and that he who is hard-worked needs frequent and substantial food. Tell them that you receive the Blessed Sacrament that you may learn to receive it better;—one rarely does that well which one does seldom. Our mountain hares turn white in winter, because they live in and feed upon the snow; and by dint of adoring and feeding upon Beauty, Goodness, and Purity itself in this most Divine Sacrament, you too will become lovely, holy, and pure.—ST. FRANCIS DE SALES.

*Frequent
com-
munion.*

XI.

WE must not cease to be childlike when we begin to ask and

*The
childlike
spirit.*

*The
childlike
spirit.*

answer questions.
stand nothing abo
question, but it m
trust, and love,—c
answer when more
and to be left with
all when the height
soar beyond all visi
whose prerogative i
equal and to compr
its Author. FAARI

X

Purdy.

THE pure crys
"Is there n
about it, I mean m
"I don't know w
It is a long time al
thing in which ther
not much in this, pe
must be either di
there's an end. S
hands, and with on

Rubies.

21

can wash your hands without changing them, but not hearts, nor crystals. On the whole, while you are young, it will be as well to take care that your hearts don't want much washing; for they may perhaps need wringing also, when they do.—*Ethics of the Dust.*

Purity.

XIII.

THE whole subject of the formation of metals and crystals strikingly typifies the ennobling processes of grace, by which the Spirit of God changes the corruption of our nature into the bright and beautiful simplicity of a heavenly life. As the rude lump of coke may be crystallised into the exquisite light-refracting diamond, and as the common clay of the soil casts off its unattractive dress, and appears as the brilliant silver-like aluminium, so the sinner sunk lowest in the fearful pit and miry clay may be

Living stones.

*Living
stones.*

transformed in the renewing of the mind, and become a new creature Christ Jesus. Each stone is a matter of creation, and bears the image and superscription of the Lord of all. The mineral kingdom is one string of the great harp of creation, that harmoniously shows forth His praise. As Augustine says, "*Discite lapides esse more negotiatores regni celorum*" To no one department of nature is the task of imaging spiritual truth confined. The whole system of things around us was constituted from the beginning with a view to Redemption. Not in the good gold, the bdellium or onyx stone of the earthly Eden, do realise the whole idea of God as symbolised by the mineral kingdom; but in the jasper walls, and golden streets and foundations garnished with the manner of precious stones, of the new Jerusalem : matter in its highest, p

Rubies.

23

est, and least perishable form constituting the home of redeemed man in his noblest condition, transformed into the likeness of the Redeemer—the creation that groaned and travailed with pain exalted in the redemption of men, for which it waited so long.—
HUGH MACMILLAN.

*Living
stones.*

XIV.

FIRE trieth iron, and temptation a just man. We know not oftentimes what we are able to do, but temptations do show us what we are.—
—THOMAS A KEMPIS.

*The furnace of
trial.*

XV.

AGATES, of all stones, confess most of their past history; but all crystallisation goes on under, and partly records, circumstances of infinite variety, but always involving difficulty, interruptions, and change of condition at different times. . . . The poor

*Sermons
in stones.*

*Sermons
in stones.*

little crystals are wonderfully like human creatures,—forget all that is going on if they don't see it, however dreadful ; and never think of what is to happen to-morrow. They are spiteful or loving, and indolent or painstaking, and orderly or licentious, with no thought whatever of the lava or the flood which may break over them any day, and evaporate them into air bubbles, or wash them into a solution of salts. And you may look at them, once understanding the surrounding conditions of their fate, with an endless interest. You will see crowds of unfortunate little crystals, who have been forced to constitute themselves in a hurry, their dissolving element being fiercely scorched away ; you will see them doing their best, bright and numberless, but tiny. Then you will find indulged crystals, who have had centuries to form them-

Rubies.

25

selves in, and have changed their mind and ways continually ; and have been tired, and taken heart again ; and have been sick, and got well again ; and thought they would try a different diet, and then thought better of it ; and made but a poor use of their advantages after all. And others you will see, who have begun life as wicked crystals ; and then have been impressed by alarming circumstances, and have become converted crystals, and behaved amazingly for a little while, and fallen away again, and ended but discredibly, perhaps even in decomposition, so that one doesn't know what will become of them. And sometimes you will see deceitful crystals, that look as soft as velvet, and are deadly to all near them ; and sometimes you will see deceitful crystals that seem flint-edged, and are endlessly gentle and true wherever

*Sermons
in stones.*

Babies.

gentleness and truth are needed. And sometimes you will see little child-crystals put in school and made to stand in rows, and taken the greatest care of, and taught how to hold themselves up, and behave, and sometimes you will see unhappy little child-crystals left to lie about in the dirt, and pick up their living and learn manners as they can. and sometimes you will see fat crystals eating up thin ones, like great capitalists and little labourers; and politico-economic crystals teaching the stupid ones how to eat each other, and cheat each other; and foolish crystals getting in the way of wise ones; and impatient crystals spoiling the plans of patient ones irreparably,—just as things go on in the world. And sometimes you may see hypocritical crystals taking the shape of others, though they are nothing like in their minds and van-

Rubies.

27

pire crystals eating out the heart of others ; and hermit-crab crystals living in the shells of others ; and parasite crystals living on the means of others ; and courtier crystals glittering in attendance upon others ; and all these, besides the two great companies of war and peace, who ally themselves, resolutely to attack, or resolutely to defend. And for the close, you see the broad shadow and deadly force of the inevitable fate, above all this : you see the multitudes of crystals whose time has come ; not a set time, as with us, but yet a time, sooner or later, when they all must give up their crystal ghosts :—when the strength by which they grew, and the strength given them to breathe, pass away from them, and they fail, and are consumed, and vanish away, and another generation is brought to life, framed out of their ashes.—*Ethics of the Dust.*

*Sermons
in stones.*

*In Thy
Light
shall
I see
light.*

XVI.

ALL the joys we have are in a very real sense from the Eternal Lord, Who has redeemed us by His Incarnation, and did thereby even merit grace for the angels, who needed not redeeming grace. From the joy, therefore, of the highest seraphim to the blithe play of the Christian child on the village green, all joy is from Him. Nay, because of the Word's peculiar connection with creation, we may reverently say that the joys in the bright eyes and inarticulate thanksgivings of animals are from Him. He is the Light of creatures, because He is the brightness of the Father, and where there is Light, there is joy.—
FABER.

XVII.

*Ere the
day
break.*

I THINK if people oftener saw the break of day, they would vow

Rubies.

29

oftener to keep that dawning day holy, and would not so often let its fair hours drift away with nothing done, that were not best left undone.—ARIADNE.

*Ere the
day
break.*

XVIII.

ONE must deal with a troublesome neighbour as children swallow physic, with our eyes shut; shut, that is, to the unacceptable brother, but open to God, in and for Whom all is acceptable, since He has made all things, and all His works are perfect. Moses' rod worked wonders in his hand, though, when he cast it down, it became a serpent: even so our neighbour is but a mere worm of the earth, but in God's Hand he becomes an instrument whereby we may obtain heaven.—ST. FRANCIS DE SALES.

*Be piti-
ful.*

XIX.

THE Sidonian servants agreed among themselves to choose

*When
ye think
not.*

*When
ye think
not,*

him to be their king who that morning should first see the sun. Whilst all others were gazing on the east, one alone looked on the west. Some admired, more mocked him, as if he looked on the feet, there to find the eye of the face. But he first of all discovered the light of the sun shining on the tops of the houses. God is seen sooner, easier, clearer in His operations than in His essence. Best beheld by reflection in His creatures. For "the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made."—FULLER.

XX.

*Who
covereth
the
Heavens
with
clouds,*

IT is a strange thing how little people in general know about the sky. It is the part of creation in which Nature has done more for the sake of pleasing man, more for the sole and

Rubies.

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evident purpose of talking to him and teaching him, than in any other of her works, and it is just the part we attend least to. There is not a moment of any day of our lives, when nature is not producing scene after scene, picture after picture, glory after glory, and working still upon such exquisite and constant principles of the most perfect beauty, that it is quite certain it is all done for us, and intended for our perpetual pleasure. And every man, wherever placed, however far from other sources of interest or of beauty, has this doing for him constantly. The noblest scenes of the earth can be seen and known but by few ; but the sky is for all. Bright as it is, it is not "too bright nor good for human nature's daily food ;"—it is fitted in all its functions for the perpetual comfort and exalting of the heart, for the soothing it, and purifying it from its dross and

*Who
aggregeth
the
heavens
with
clouds.*

*Who
covereth
the
heavens
with
clouds.*

dust. And yet we never attend to it, never make it a subject of thought, but as it has to do with our animal sensations. . . . If, in our moments of idleness and insipidity, we turn to the sky as a last resource, which of its phenomena do we speak of? One says it has been wet, and another it has been windy, and another it has been warm. Who among the whole chattering crowd can tell me of the forms and the precipices of the chain of tall white mountains that girded the horizon at noon yesterday? Who saw the narrow sunbeam that came out of the south, and smote upon their summits until they melted and mouldered away in a dust of blue rain? Who saw the dance of the dead clouds when the sunlight left them last night, and the west wind blew them before it like withered leaves? All has passed unregretted as unseen ; or if the apathy

be ever shaken off for an instant, it is only by what is gross or what is extraordinary ; and yet it is not in the broad and fierce manifestations of the elemental energies, not in the clash of the hail, nor the drift of the whirlwind, that the highest characters of the sublime are developed. God is not in the earthquake, nor in the fire, but in the still small voice.—J. RUSKIN.

*Who
covereth
the
heavens
with
clouds.*

XXI.

WE are in a world of spirits, as well as in a world of sense, and we hold communion with it, and take part in it, though we are not conscious of doing so. If this seems strange to any one, let him reflect that we are undeniably taking part in a third world, which we do indeed see, but about which we do not know more than about the angelic hosts,—the world of brute animals. Can anything be more

*Two
worlds
are ours.*

*Two
worlds
are ours.*

marvellous and startling, unless we were used to it, than that we should have a race of beings about us whom we do but see, and as little know their state, or can describe their interests, or their destiny, as we can tell of the inhabitants of the sun and moon? It is indeed a very overpowering thought, when we get to fix our minds upon it, that we familiarly use, I may say hold intercourse with creatures who are as much strangers to us, as mysterious, as if they were the fabulous, unearthly beings, more powerful than man, and yet his slave, which Eastern superstitions have invented. We have more real knowledge about the Angels than about the brutes. They have apparently passions, habits, and a certain accountableness, but all is mystery about them. We do not know whether they can sin or not, whether they are under punishment, whether they are

to live after this life. We inflict very great sufferings on a portion of them, and they in turn, every now and then, seem to retaliate on us, as if by a wonderful law. We depend on them in various important ways; we use their labour, we eat their flesh. This, however, relates to such of them as come near us: cast your thoughts abroad on the whole number of them, large and small, in vast forests, or in the water, or in the air; and then say whether the presence of such countless multitudes, so various in their natures, so strange and wild in their shapes, living on the earth without ascertainable object, is not as mysterious as anything which Scripture says about the angels. Is it not plain to our senses that there is a world inferior to us in the scale of beings, with which we are connected without understanding what it is? And is it

*Two
worlds
are ours.*

*Two
worlds
are ours.*

difficult to faith to admit the word of Scripture concerning our connection with a world superior to us?—J. H. NEWMAN.

XXII.

*Urbs
caelestis.*

THE world is but as a quarry, where the living stones of the heavenly Jerusalem are cut and moulded.—ST. FRANCIS DE SALES.

XXIII.

*Bene-
dicite.*

THE blessed Francis [of Assisi] was travelling through the Marches of Venice, when he heard a vast multitude of birds singing in the shrubs around. Then he said to his comrades, "Our little sisters, the birds, are praising their Creator; let us join them, and sing the Hours to the Lord." So they went amid the birds, who did not move, or cease to sing; but, forasmuch as by reason of their chirping, the brethren could not hear one another, the saint

turned to the birds, and said, "My sisters, cease your song awhile till we have offered our bounden praise to the Lord." Then forthwith the birds held their peace, while the brethren sang their offices, and so soon as it was ended, they began once more their song.—FIORETTI.

Benedicite.

XXIV.

WHO can be ignorant how much the heron and the hawk surpass all other birds in the swiftness of their flight? But an ostrich has the likeness of their wing, but not the celerity of their flight. For it cannot in truth rise from the ground, and raises its wings, in appearance as if to fly, but yet never raises itself from the earth in flying. Thus, doubtless, are all hypocrites, who, while they simulate the conduct of the good, possess a resemblance of a holy appearance, but

*Wings
for
heaven.*

*Wings
for
heaven.*

have no reality of holy conduct. They have in truth wings for flight in appearance, but in their doing they creep along the ground, because they spread their wings by the semblance of sanctity, but overwhelmed by the weight of secular cares they are not at all raised from the earth. For our Lord, reprobating the appearance of the Pharisees, reproved them as if He were saying, The beautiful show of your wings seems to raise you up, but the weight of your conduct weighs you down to the lowest depths. — ST. GREGORY, *Book of Job*.

XXV.

*Cantate
Domi-
num
canticum
novum.*

LORD, my voice by nature is harsh and untunable, and it is vain to lavish any art to better it. Can my singing of psalms be pleasing to Thy ears, which is unpleasant to my own? Yet, though I cannot chant with the

nightingale, or chirp with the black-bird, I had rather chatter with the swallow, yea, rather croak with the raven, than be altogether silent. Hadst Thou given me a better voice, I would have praised Thee with a better voice. Now, what my music wants in sweetness, let it have in sense ;—singing praises with understanding. Yea, Lord, create in me a new heart (therein to make melody), and I will be contented with my old voice, until, in Thy due time, being admitted into the choir of Heaven, I have another, more harmonious, bestowed upon me.—FULLER.

*Cantate
Domi-
num
canticum
novum.*

XXVI.

ONCE when St. Francis of Assisi was preaching in the town of Aloia, the swallows, with their perpetual twittering, incommoded the audience. Francis had gone up to a high piece of ground, that he might

*Little
sisters,
hear ye
me !*

*Little
sisters,
hear ye
me!*

be seen by all, and had asked for silence from the assembled people. But the birds were fitting all about in airy circles, making their nests, chirping and calling to each other overhead in the blue heaven of the Italian sky. When it became apparent that these sweet disturbers of the peace prevented their human companions from hearing the Word of God, the preacher turned, and courteously saluted the little nest-builders. "My sisters," he said, "it is now time that I should speak. Since you have had your say, listen now in your turn to the Word of God, and be silent till the sermon is finished." It is needless to add that he was perfectly obeyed. The scene is one to charm a painter—the little piazza of the town among the hills, the exquisite spring of Italy moving all hearts; the silent groups all about, watching every movement of the far-

Rubies.

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famed saint ; and the swallows in their circles skimming all over those dark earnest faces, touching the cathedral roof, the quaint houses, filling the soft air with the twitter of life and movement."—MRS. OLIPHANT, *Life of St. Francis*.

Little sisters, hear ye me !

XXVII.

HAVE pity, O Lord God, lest they who go by the way trample on the unfledged bird, and send Thine angel to replace it into the nest, that it may live till it can fly. — ST. AUGUSTINE.

Pitifully look on our afflictions.

XXVIII.

ST. ANTHONY being once at Rimini, where were many heretics, he sought to bring them to the light of the faith by preaching to them of Christ and the Holy Scriptures. But neither would they follow his teaching, nor even listen to what he

The fishes' sermon.

*The
fishes'
sermon.*

said. Then one day St. Anthony was moved of God to go to the banks of the river, where it falls into the sea, and standing there between the two, he began to preach God's word to the fishes, saying, "Hearken to the word of God, O ye fishes of the sea, since these unbelievers refuse to hear!" And so soon as he had said this, there gathered together before him a vast multitude of fishes, great and small, so that never had either sea or river witnessed so huge a gathering; and all raised their heads out of the water, and turned attentively towards St. Anthony, hearkening with great peace, order, and courtesy—the little fish drawing nearest to the shore, then the middle-sized ones, and behind, where the water was deepest, the big fishes. Being thus favourably arranged, St. Anthony began to preach solemnly to them, saying, "O my brethren of

the sea, greatly it behoves ye, according to your capacity, to thank our Creator, who has given you so varied an element for your dwelling-place ; wherein you find both salt water and fresh ; also you have many shelters, wherein to cheat the tempest, also clear, transparent water, and therein such food as ye crave. When your courteous and beneficent Creator made you, He bade you increase and multiply, and blessed you exceedingly ; and then, when most other animals perished in the Deluge, you He preserved, and He has given you fins whereby to move whithersoever ye will. To you God appointed that ye should save the prophet Jonah, and on the third day bring him safe to land. Ye provided the tax penny for our Lord Jesus Christ when He, being a poor man, had not wherewithal to pay. And ye supplied food for Him both before and after

*The
Ashes'
sermon.*

*The
Ashes'
sermon.*

His Resurrection, in a great mystery : for all which things it behoves you to praise and bless God, Who has done so great things for you." Then the fish opened their mouths and bowed their heads, and, with such signs of reverence as were possible to them, praised God. Then St. Anthony, in great joy, exclaimed, "Blessed be the God eternal, that the very fish honour Him more than these heretics." And the people came from the city, and beholding this marvel their hearts were touched, and they fell at St. Anthony's feet, and listened to his word, and many were converted to the faith of Christ. Then the saint dismissed the fish, and likewise the people, who all departed in reverent joy.—FIORETTI.

XXIX.

*Side
gleams.*

ONLY think what a treasure of *secondary satisfactions*, so to

call them, the Bible itself is : the perfection of poetry, language, and history,—its blessings on conjugal love, family delights, the ways of little children, the beauties and mysteries of art and nature. It seems to say, "Take all these, and make much of them for God's glory : be assured that there is nothing innocent so trifling, that it may not be thus sacrificed to Him."—
J. KEBLE.

*Side
gleams.*

XXX.

ONCE only in the year, yet once, does the world which we see show forth its hidden powers, and in a manner manifest itself. Then the leaves come out, and the blossoms on the fruit-trees and flowers, and the grass and corn spring up. There is a sudden rush and burst outwardly of that hidden life which God has lodged in the material world. Well, that

*The mir-
acles of
spring.*

46	Rabies.
<i>The miracles of spring.</i>	<p>shows you, as by a sample, what it can do at God's command, when He gives the word. This earth, which now buds forth in leaves and blossoms, will one day burst forth into a new world of light and glory, in which we shall see saints and angels dwelling. Who would think, except from his experience of former springs all through his life, who could conceive two or three months before, that it was possible that the face of nature, which then seemed so lifeless, should become so splendid and varied? How different is a tree, how different a prospect, when leaves are on it and off it! How unlikely it would seem, before the event, that the dry and naked branches should suddenly be clothed with what is so bright and so refreshing! Yet in God's good time, leaves come on the trees. The season may delay, but it will come at last. So it is with the coming of that</p>

eternal spring for which all Christians are waiting. Come it will, though it delay ; yet though it tarry, let us wait for it, " because it will surely come, it will not tarry."—J. H. NEWMAN.

*The mir-
acles of
spring.*

XXXI.

“ **W**HAT hast thou that thou hast not received ? ” It is a searching question ; but the true answer to it ought to leave us other men than perchance we are ; more considerate and generous towards our fellows, more tender and sympathetic, more capable of making allowance for difficulties which we have ourselves experienced, or for difficulties which we can at least imagine, more slow to condemn what looks like evil, more eager to acknowledge merit, and to proclaim superiority, more considerate and respectful when dealing with inferiors, more resolute in the endeavour to crush and

*Self-
know-
ledge.*

*Self-
know-
ledge.*

cast out the scorn and bitterness that wells up too readily from an unhumble heart. It is not easy all this, but it is humility in practice ; and persevering endeavours after a true self-knowledge, together with constant recourse to a Higher Power, will, in God's good time, help us on our way.—H. P. LIDDON.

XXXII.

*No thorn-
less rose.*

ST. BASIL says that the rose amid its thorns preaches a lesson to men. All that is pleasant in life, so it tells us mortals, is mingled with sadness ; no joy is altogether pure, all enjoyment is liable to be marked by regrets ; marriage is saddened by widowhood, children bring anxiety, glory often turns to shame, neglect follows upon honour, weariness on pleasure, sickness on health. Truly the rose is a lovely flower, but it moves me to sadness, reminding me, as it

Rubles.	49
<p>at for my sin the earth was ed to bring forth thorns.</p> <p>XXXIII.</p> <p>preacher who produces naught re beautiful ideas and fine is like a tree bearing leaves ich is in danger of being cut d cast into the fire. "I have ou," the Lord said to His , "that ye should go and rth fruit, and that your fruit remain."— ST. FRANCIS DE</p> <p>XXXIV.</p> <p>of some sort, or confusion of ght, or of cloud, are general e distance may vary in differ- ates at which the effects of in, but they are always pre- d therefore, in all probability, at that we should enjoy them. surely need not wonder that</p>	<p><i>Not leaves only.</i></p> <p><i>" There went up a mist from the earth."</i></p>

*"There
went up
a mist
from the
earth."*

mist and all its phenomena have been made delightful to us, since our happiness as thinking beings must depend on our being content to accept only partial knowledge even in those matters which chiefly concern us. If we insist upon perfect intelligibility and complete declaration in every moral subject, we shall instantly fall into misery of unbelief. The whole happiness and power of energetic action depend upon our being able to breathe and live in the cloud;—content to see it opening here, and closing there; rejoicing to catch, through the thinnest films of it, glimpses of stable and substantial things; but yet perceiving a nobleness even in the concealment, and rejoicing that the kindly veil is spread where the untempered light might have scorched us, or the infinite clearness wearied. And I believe that the resentment of this interference of

Rubies.

51

the mist is one of the forms of proud error which are too easily mistaken for virtues. To be content in utter darkness and ignorance is indeed unmanly, and therefore we think that to love light and find knowledge must always be right. Yet whenever *pride* has any share in the work, even knowledge and light may be ill pursued. Knowledge is good, and light is good; yet man perished in seeking knowledge, and moths perish in seeking light; and if we, who are crushed before the moth, will not accept such mystery as is needful to us, we shall perish in like manner. But accepted in humbleness, it instantly becomes an element of pleasure; and every rightly constituted mind ought to rejoice, not so much in knowing anything clearly, as in feeling that there is infinitely more which it cannot know. None but proud or weak men would mourn over this, for

*"There
went up
a mist
from the
earth."*

"There
went up
a mist
from the
earth."

we may always know more, if we choose, by working on; but the pleasure is, I think, to humble people, in knowing that the journey is endless, the treasure inexhaustible,—watching the cloud still march before them with its summitless pillar, and being sure that, to the end of time, and to the length of eternity, the mysteries of its infinity will still open farther and farther, their dimness being the sign and necessary adjunct of their inexhaustibleness.—J. RUSKIN.

XXXV.

OF all man's sources of enjoyment, none display more clearly the bountifulness of God than the fragrant odours of nature. The world might have been made entirely scentless, and yet every essential purpose have been fulfilled. The vegetable kingdom, which is the great storehouse

A mist
smelling
storehouse

Rubies.

53

of perfumes, might have performed all its functions, and yet not a single plant exhaled an agreeable odour. Fragrance seems so wholly superfluous and accidental, that we cannot but infer that it was imparted to the objects which possess it, not for their own sakes, but for our gratification. We regard it as a peculiar blessing, sent to us directly from the Hand of our heavenly Father; and we are the more confirmed in this idea by the fact that the human period is the principal epoch of fragrant plants. Geologists inform us that all the eras of the earth's history previous to the Upper Miocene were destitute of perfumes. Forests of club mosses and ferns hid in their sombre bosom no bright-eyed floweret, and shed no scented richness on the passing breeze. Palms and cycads produce no perfume-breathing blossoms. It is only when we come to

*A sweet
smelling
savour.*

*A sweet
smelling
savour.*

the periods immediately antecedent to the human that we meet with an odorous flora. God placed man in a sweet-scented garden as his home.—
HUGH MACMILLAN.

XXXVI.

*Root and
branch.*

THE free giving of the branches of our present estate to God, is the readiest means to have the root increased for the future.—FULLER.

XXXVII.

*But only
Thou,
O God.*

WHEN all things but God give way, because they are void and empty, and our pursuits are like the coloured ends of rainbows, seen through even while we pursue them, and always receding before us as we advance then we find such rest and such sufficiency and such transcending calm in God, that love weeps over the weakness of its own worship, and frets with

Rubies.	55
<p>a tranquil fretfulness because it cannot love Him more.—FABER.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">XXXVIII.</p> <p>IT is humility above all other things which weakens or snaps asunder the holdfasts of selfishness.</p>	<p><i>Self unselfed.</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">XXXIX.</p> <p>WHAT is spikenard but prayer? Prayer, and of what kind? Not cold, listless, idle prayers, broken up by other thoughts—tarnished with other remembrances. The coal must be alive and glowing if the fragrance of the incense is to arise: love must be glowing and fervent also, if the sacrifice of prayer is to come up before the heavenly altar with acceptance. Such prayer, St. Bernard says, as is the true sacrifice to God, the true music of the angels, the banquet of the saints, the armour of supplicants, the medicine of penitents, the ointment of the wounded ;</p>	<p><i>The incense of prayer.</i></p>

The incense of prayer.

—which is the mother of tears, the propitiation of sins, the bridge over temptations, the wall against tribulation, the fountain of virtues, the illumination of the soul, the manifestation of hope, the exceeding great treasure of the Bride of Christ. Jesus left us an example how our spikenard should send forth its sweet savour.—J. M. NEALE.

God's Hand.

XL.

EVERY step which a creature takes, when he has once been created, increases his dependence upon his Creator. This is in fact his true blessedness, to be ever more and more enclosed in the Hand of God Who made him. The Creator's Hand is the creature's home.—FABER.

Dignity of service.

XLI.

THE dignity of service, like the dignity of labour, is a moral fact

which the world is slow to understand.
 . . . Service is the true law, the true
 dignity of man's existence. Service is
 written everywhere, for those who have
 eyes to see, on the face of creation.
 The service of unconscious law, the
 service of sentient life, the service of
 rational and free things, the service of
 the splendid and illuminated intelli-
 gences around the Throne—these are
 the steps in the ascent.—H. P. LID-
 DON.

XLII.

IF thy heart were sincere and upright,
 then every creature would be unto
 thee a looking-glass of life, and a book
 of holy doctrine. There is no creature
 so small and abject, that it representeth
 not the goodness of God. If thou
 wert inwardly good and pure, then
 wouldst thou be able to see and under-
 stand all things well without imped-
 iment.—THOMAS À KEMPIS.

*Dignity
 of ser-
 vice.*

*Pure
 heart,
 pure
 sight.*

*Wings
of silver.*

XLIII.

WE are surrounded by earthly desires and heavenly longings. The latter cannot be too numerous; they are as so many wings which raise us up to God, even as "the wings of a dove," which David craved for, that he might fly away and be at rest. But of earthly longings, longings after the fleeting joys and gifts of this life, we cannot have too few. St. Augustine compares them to birdlime, hindering our spiritual flight. I wish for few things, and I do not wish eagerly for those. I have scarcely any longings; were I to begin life again, I would fain have none. Earth is but a poor place, or rather it is nothing at all to those who aim at heaven. Time is no more than the shadow which points to Eternity.—
ST. FRANCIS DE SALES.

XLIV.

HE who habituates himself in his daily life to seek for the stern facts in whatever he hears or sees, will have these facts again brought before him by the involuntary imaginative power, in their noblest associations; and he who seeks for frivolities and fallacies will have frivolities and fallacies again presented to him in his dreams.—J. RUSKIN.

Reality.

XLV.

MEDIÆVAL commentators remind us that the swan, by the Levitical law, was forbidden to be eaten. The swan! Why? The swan, so very white—the swan, that sings so sweetly at its death? (and that is no fable, but a piece of natural history). Because, they answer, white as its feathers are, it has the blackest flesh

*The
Swan!!*

*God
in all
things.*

of any bird,—beautiful outside, deformed within—white, but comely—as a hypocrite.—J. M. NEALE.

XLVI.

WHEN conversation fell upon architecture, painting, music, flowers, or gardens, St. Francis found no fault with those who sought interest therein, only he would fain have all such occupations so used as to become means of raising the soul to God, as was his own habit in all things. Thus the sight of flourishing plants led him to liken our souls to the field God cultivates. Seeing a church, he would say, “Were our souls but meet for His indwelling!” Gazing on beautiful flowers, “When shall we bring forth our fruit in due season?” or on an exquisite picture, “What is so lovely as a soul formed in the image of God?” Passing a fountain, he said, “When will

our hearts be filled with living waters? How long shall we neglect the fountain of life, and hew out for ourselves broken cisterns? When shall we drink freely from the wells of salvation?" Crossing the mountains, he would quote the Psalms, "I will lift up mine eyes to the hills from whence cometh my help. O ye mountains and hills, bless ye the Lord." Crossing a river, "How souls flow towards God, even as the stream to the sea." Everything brought God before his thoughts. — SPIRIT OF ST. FRANCIS.

XLVII.

NO sense is more closely connected with the sphere of soul than the sense of smell. It reaches more directly and excites more powerfully the emotional nature than either sight or hearing. It is an unexplored avenue, leading at once, and by a process too enchanting to examine, into the ideal

*God
in all
things.*

*Associa-
tions of
smell.*

Associations of smell.

world. Its very vagueness and indefiniteness make it more suggestive, and quicken the mind's consciousness. Its agency is most subtle and extensive—going down to the very depths of our nature, and back to the earliest dawn of life. Memory especially is keenly susceptible to its influence. Every one knows how instantaneously a particular odour will recall the past circumstances associated with it. Trains of association long forgotten—glimpses of old familiar things—mystic visions and memories of youth, beyond the reach even of the subtle power of music—are brought back by the perfume of some little flower noteless to all others. Lime-blossoms, murmurous with bees in the shady avenue—hyacinth-bells, standing silent beside some sapphire spring—violets, like children's eyes heavy with sleep, on some greenwood bank—each exhales a fragrance into

Rubies.

63

which all the heart of nature seems to melt, and touches the soul with the memories of years. It is on account of this far-reaching power of fragrance, its association with the deep and hidden things of the heart, that so many of the Bible images appeal to our sense of smell. The Psalms and prophetic writings are full of the most beautiful and expressive metaphors, applied to the most solemn persons and things, borrowed from perfumes ; while the Song of Solomon is like an oriental garden stocked with delicious flowers, as grateful to the sense of smell as to the sense of sight.—HUGH MACMILLAN.

Associations of smell.

XLVIII.

“TELL me where Thou feedest?”
That is, where in the evening,
that glorious evening, when, as the
Prophet speaks, there shall be light—
Thou feedest Thy sheep by the river

In a green pasture.

Sickness.

cords thou canst not break ; and therefore lie thou down gently,—and suffer the Hand of God to do what He please, that at least thou mayest swallow an advantage, which the care and severe mercies of God force down thy throat.—BISHOP JEREMY TAYLOR.

LI.

Pain.

HE that is afraid of pain is afraid of his own nature ; and if his fear be violent, it is a sign his patience is none at all, and an impatient person is not ready dressed for heaven.—BISHOP JEREMY TAYLOR.

LII.

*He
knoweth
that ye
have
need.*

WHEN men die just as they are coming into the possession of riches, or at the outset of a smiling career of laudable ambition, it is perhaps because God sees in their natural character or in their personal circum-

stances some seeds of future evil, and so He takes them, while all that evil lies innocently undeveloped in their souls. Who can think of what death is, and doubt that God's wisdom and His love are brought to bear upon both its manner and its time?—FABER.

He knoweth that ye have need.

LIII.

WHAT is the religious bearing of the modern passion for nature in its pictorial aspect, which is a feature of the day? . . . The rise of this remarkable feeling in society is a fact that deserves attention, as it cannot be without consequences bearing on religion. . . . When the materialist has exhausted himself in efforts to explain utility in nature, it would appear to be the peculiar office of beauty to rise up suddenly as a confounding and baffling *extra*, which was not even formally provided for

Beauty of Nature.

*Beauty
of
Nature*

in his scheme. Nature goes off a tangent which carries her farther than ever from the head under which he places her, and shows the utter inadequacy of that head to include all that has to be excluded in it. . . . There is this remarkable difference between useful contrivance and beauty as evidence of an intelligent cause that contrivance has a complete end and account of itself without any reference to the understanding of man. True, it is an object, and a very stimulating object of the understanding, but it does not require that use of it in order to account for it, even if no single one of all those sentient beings who profit by the contrivance of nature *understand* it, still they profit by it all the same—this is a sufficient account of it it is enough if it works; and it is no necessary for its use that it should be seen. But it is essential to the ver

sense and meaning of beauty that it should be seen ; and, inasmuch as it is visible to reason alone, we have thus in the very structure of nature a recognition of reason, and a distinct address to reason, wholly unaccountable, unless there is a higher reason or mind to which to make it. For what but reason can address reason ? And beauty is visible to reason alone. . . . The beauty of nature is necessary for the perfection of praise, and the praise of the Creator must be essentially weakened without it ; it must be roused and excited by sight. It may seem extraordinary, but it is the case, that though we certainly look at contrivance or machinery in nature with a high admiration, still with all the countless and multitudinous uses, which we acknowledge with gratitude, there is nothing in it which raises the mind's interest in nearly the same degree that

*Beauty
of
Nature.*

70	<p>Rubies.</p>
<p><i>Beauty of Nature.</i></p>	<p>beauty does. . . . Beauty stands upon the threshold of the mystical world, and excites curiosity about God. — J. B. MOZLEY.</p> <p>LIV.</p> <p>WHEN night overshadowed Abraham he saw a star and said, "This is my Lord." But when it set he said, "I like not those that set." And when he saw the moon rising he said, "This is my Lord." But when the moon set, he answered, "Verily, if my Lord direct me not in the right way, I shall be as one of those that err." And when he saw the sun rising he said, "This is my Lord, this is greater than star or moon." But when the sun went down, he said, "O my people, I am clear of these things. I turn my face to Him Who hath made the heaven and the earth." — <i>Koran.</i></p>
<p><i>My Lord and my God.</i></p>	

LV.

DURING a visitation tour in the snow mountains of Facigny, St. Francis de Sales was much touched by the death of a shepherd, who, in trying to save one of his flock, fell over a precipice, and was found dead and frozen. He applied the lesson to his own flock, and the duty of not sparing his very life for their sakes. "O my God," said I to myself, "this poor shepherd sought his missing sheep with an ardour which the ice could not chill; wherefore then am I so cold in seeking my sheep? My heart was deeply moved and melted within me."—ST. FRANCIS DE SALES.

*The
good
Shep-
herd.*

LVI.

HE who loves not God, nor his brother, cannot love the grass beneath his feet, nor the creatures which live not for his uses, filling those

*The
Source
of all
Love.*

*The
Source
of all
Love.*

spaces in the universe which he heeds not : while, on the other hand, none can love God, nor his human brother, without looking upon them, every one, as in that respect his brethren also, and perhaps worthier than he, if in the under concords they have to fill, their part is touched more truly.—J. RUSKIN.

LVII.

*Nearer
to God.*

WHEN men have started from outward Nature, when they have used it as a foundation, and made it their first stay, its glory has issued in gloom and despondency ; but to those who first made the knowledge of themselves and their own souls their care, it has ever turned to light and hope. They have read in Nature an augury and a presage ; they have found in it a language and a revelation ; and they have caught in it signs and intimations of Him Who has robed Himself with its

honour and majesty, has decked Himself with its light, and Who created it as an expression and manifestation of Himself.—J. B. MOZLEY.

Nearer to God.

LVIII.

SOME fish improve in flavour when they leave the sea, and go up the sweeter inland waters; and so some souls do but redouble their fervent piety when called into scenes which naturally tend to foster impurity and carelessness. — ST. FRANCIS DE SALES.

Good out of evil.

LIX.

IT is very remarkable that God, Who giveth plenteously to all creatures; . . . yet in the distribution of our time seems to be strict-handed, and gives it to us, not as nature gives us rivers, enough to drown us, but drop by drop, minute after minute, so that we can never have two minutes to-

Time.

Time.

gether, but He takes away one when He gives us another. This should teach us to value our time, since God so values it, and by His small distribution of it, tells us it is the most precious thing we have.—BISHOP JEREMY TAYLOR.

LX.

**Simple
humility.**

ONE daily defect or infirmity, overcome by God's aid, is worth whole years of supposed security and highly-wrought feeling, without such earnest self-mastery.—J. KEBLER.

LXI.

***Dolce
amaro.***

IT takes more oil than vinegar and salt to make a good salad. Always be as indulgent as you can, remembering that one can catch more flies with a spoonful of honey than with a hundred bowls of vinegar. If you must exceed on one or the other side, let it be on that of indulgence.

No sauce was ever spoilt by sugar.—
ST. FRANCIS DE SALES.

LXII.

A well-regulated exterior ought to spring from a still better internal rule ; inasmuch as the cause should always be better than the result ;— beautiful leaves and abundant fruit, and all the virtue of a tree, spring from its healthy roots. Without leaves the tree would lose its beauty, and have no shelter for its fruit, and so a well-regulated external life is both a bright indication of that inner life which governs it, and tends to maintain the integrity of the inner man.
—*Ibid.*

*By their
fruit.*

LXIII.

EVERY Christian is producing two sets of influences. Two currents of power issue from him, which set in motion the wheels of life around him. One is the unconscious, involuntary

*Power
of char-
acter.*

*Power
of char-
acter.*

influence of his real character, the other is the voluntary influence of what he consciously says and does—what he says and does for a special purpose. Now these two currents that flow from him may be opposed to one another. The one that seeks to set in motion the wheels of life may be neutralised by the one that comes in the opposite direction, and tends to make them stand still. The character may be saying one thing, and the lips and conduct another. A man preaches love to Christ and to men, but if his own heart and life are not saturated with this love—if it is not an experience in his own heart—he will preach in vain ; for the language of his nature will be opposed to the language of his lips ; the influence of his character will contradict the influence of his words. The power of character arises from its truthfulness.—HUGH MACMILLAN.

Rubles.	77
<p data-bbox="445 565 548 598" style="text-align: center;">LXIV.</p> <p data-bbox="219 611 789 772"> IT is through loss that all gain in this world is made. The winter leaves must fall that the summer leaves may grow.—HUGH MACMILLAN. </p> <p data-bbox="460 809 545 842" style="text-align: center;">LXV.</p> <p data-bbox="219 855 793 1382"> EJACULATIONS take not up any room in the soul. They give liberty of calling, so that at the same instant one may follow his proper vocation. The husbandman may dart forth an ejaculation, and not make a balk the more. The seaman, nevertheless, steers his ship right in the darkest night. Yea, the soldier at the same time may shoot out his prayer to God, and aim his pistol at his enemy, the one better hitting the mark for the other. </p> <p data-bbox="219 1387 793 1465"> The field wherein bees feed is no whit the barer for their biting; when </p>	<p data-bbox="827 611 945 670"><i>Loss and gain.</i></p> <p data-bbox="827 861 945 944"><i>Ejaculatory prayer.</i></p>

*Ejaculatory
prayer.*

they have taken their full repast on flowers or grass, the ox may feed, the sheep fat, on their reversions. The reason is because those little chemists distil only the refined part of the flower, leaving the grasses and substance thereof. So ejaculations bind not men to any bodily observance, only busy the spiritual half, which maketh them consistent with the prosecution of any other employment.—

FULLER.

LXVI.

*Harassing
temptations.*

WHEN the tempter sees our hearts so established in grace that we shun sin as it were a serpent, and fly before its very shadow, which is temptation, he sees that he can do little else than disturb and harass us. To this end he raises up a whole troop of trifling temptations, with which he blinds the eyes as in a dust storm, so as to annoy us, and make the paths of holiness

ness disagreeable to tread. . We meet great temptations with sword and buckler, but these little ordinary ones are never so easily dispersed as by despising them. We defend ourselves against a wolf or a bear, but no one makes warlike preparations against the flies which torment one in summer. Not long ago I was standing near some beehives, and several bees settled upon me : I was going to brush them off, but a peasant who was by said, "Leave the bees alone, and don't be afraid, and they will not sting ; but if you touch them, they will sting directly !" I believed him, and not one hurt me. Now, believe me, treat your temptations in this manner ; do not meddle with them, and they will not hurt you. Pass on, and do not dally with them. — ST. FRANCIS DE SALES.

*Harassing
temptations.*

80	Rubies.
<i>Patience.</i>	<p data-bbox="658 561 785 598" style="text-align: center;">LXVII.</p> <p data-bbox="429 617 1014 1467"> “THE winter is past.” Yet it is winter in our hearts still ; else how could we hear and speak of Him Whom we profess to love as we do ? It is winter in the world around, for how little of that Sun of Righteousness do we see there ! And because iniquity abounds, the love of many has waxed cold. <i>Then</i>, all that will be past—when we see Him, we must love Him, when we see Him, there can be no more of that darkness which now so often seems to hide us from Him ; when we see Him, farewell to all need of struggle, watchfulness, repentance. “The rain is over and gone. The time of singing birds is come.” He only knows how long each has to contend before our warfare is accomplished : all I know is, that it will not be one moment longer than is necessary for patience </p>

Rubies.	81
<p>to bear our perfect work. When the four hundred and thirty years were over, it came to pass that the <i>selfsame night</i> the Lord did bring forth the children of Israel by their armies." That is very comforting, that word <i>Time</i>.—J. M. NEALE.</p> <p>LXVIII.</p> <p>ST. FRANCIS DE SALES did not think well of those men who flit from book to book, taking up first one religious exercise and then another; he compared such persons to the drone bee, which makes no honey. "Always learning, yet never coming to the knowledge of the truth: always gathering and acquiring, without retaining anything, because what they gather is put into a bottomless sack, a broken cistern. The longer a bee rests upon the flower, the more honey it will gather," he used to say.</p>	<p><i>Patience.</i></p>

LXIX.

ALL spiritual exercises," St. F. de Sales said, "without interior recollection and aspiration to God, are as bones without marrow, a sky without stars, or a tree without leaves."

LXX.

YOU must grow in the love of God by means of the root, rather than the branches.

LXXI.

IN the Battle of the Standard (fought between the English and Scotch near Northallerton, A.D. 1138), they enclosed the Host in a silver box, and set it up on the top of a ship's mast, to the end that the dying soldier might turn his eyes to that, and breathe out his soul in an act of faith and love. So for us, with this banner displayed before our eyes,—this banner followed by such

multitudes of once weeping exiles, now triumphant saints, to their country,—this banner, conquered under by once weary and fainting soldiers, now arrayed in the white robes of everlasting gladness,—how ought we not to follow too, how ought we not to conquer like them. If God be for us, who can be against us?—J. M. NEALE.

LXXII.

HUMAN beings are unceasingly exerting unconscious influence upon one another. Insensibly to themselves, they are moulding one another's character, conduct, and destiny. Without any thought or intention, or even consciousness of the fact, one man is stimulating or depressing another, and producing results of the most vital and lasting importance. How different are the effects produced by intercourse with different individuals! The very

presence of some is like sunshine, brightening and cheering all who come under their influence, stimulating mental and spiritual growth ; while the society of others acts like a dark cloud, intercepting light and warmth, chilling the feelings, and arresting the development of mind and heart. We feel at once at our ease in the presence of some people ; we speak freely and naturally, we are elevated by the unconscious influence that emanates from them. On the other hand, we are ill at ease, awkward and reserved in the expression of our thoughts and feelings, depressed and unhappy, in the presence of others. . . . The instinct of imitation, based upon this unconscious influence, is one of the most powerful in human nature, moulding the form of society, and determining the kind and degree of civilisation.—HUGH MACMILLAN.

LXXIII.

IF, passing to the edge of a sheet of snow upon the lower Alps, early in May, we find, as we are nearly sure to find, two or three little round openings pierced in it, and through these emergent a slender, pensive, fragile flower — *Soldanella Alpina* — whose small dark purple fringed bell hangs down and shudders over the icy cleft that it has cloven, as if partly wondering at its own recent grave, and partly dying of very fatigue after its hard-won victory ; we shall be, or we ought to be, moved by a totally different impression of loveliness from that which we receive among the dead ice and the idle clouds. There is now uttered to us a call for sympathy, now offered to us an image of moral purpose and achievement, which, however unconscious and senseless the creature may

The Soldanella.

*The Sol-
danella.*

indeed be that so seems to call, cannot be heard without affection, nor contemplated without worship, by any of us whose heart is rightly tuned, or whose mind is clearly and surely sighted.—
J. RUSKIN.

LXXIV.

*Who
named
the
flowers?*

WHO first named the flowers? Who gave them not their Latin titles, but the old, familiar, fanciful, poetic, rustic ones that run so curiously alike in all the different vulgar tongues? Who first called the lilies of the valley the Madonna's tears; the wild blue hyacinth, St. Dorothy's flower? Who first called the red clusters of the oleander St. Joseph's nosegays, and the clematis by her many lovely titles—consolation, traveller's joy, virgin's bower? Who gave the spiderwort to St. Bruno; the black briony for Our Lady's seal; the corn fever-few to St.

Rubies.

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Anne ; the common bean to St. Ignatius ; the baneberry to St. Christopher ; the blue valerian to Jacob for his angel's ladder ; the toywort to the shepherds for their purses ? Who first called the hyctanthes the tree of sadness ; and the starry passiflora the Passion of Christ ? Who first made dedication of the narcissus to remembrance ; the amaranthus to wounded, bleeding love ; the scabius to the desolation of widowhood ? Who named them all first in the old days that are forgotten ? It is strange that most of the tender old appellations are the same in meaning in all European tongues. The little German mädchen in her pine-woods, and the Tuscan contadina in her vineyards, and the Spanish child on the Sierras, and the farm-girl on the purple English moorlands, and the soft-eyed peasant that drives her milch cows through the sunny evening fields of

*Who
named
the
flowers ?*

*Who
named
the
flowers?*

France, all gathering their blossoms from wayside green or garden wall, give them almost all the same old names with the same sweet pathetic significance. Who gave them first?—
SIGNA.

LXXV.

*The
soul's
eye.*

IF we could but have hearts to feel, and eyes in our souls to see where we really are! There are good angels round us, and graces are raining down upon us, great and small, all our lives long, and inspirations all falling upon us, thick as snowflakes, and almost as softly and as silently, and we are fastened with a thousand fastenings to great unknown eternal purposes, and we feel them no more than a strong man feels the cobwebs and the gossamer on the autumnal grass; and all the while we are closed round, and walled in, not so much with the sun

and moon and stars, with the air and the floor of our own planet, as with the living and inevitable presence of the All Holy, Who will not spare us one moment from His sight, and Who, even while we sleep, expects us to do our work of glorifying Him, and Whose love of us, and therefore His jealousy of us, is as everlasting as Himself.—**FABER.**

*The
soul's
eye.*

LXXVI.

AS there is not a wheel in a watch which has not its own use, and the want of a few teeth is enough to stop or derange it; thus in man, when all should conduce to the glory of the Creator, it is necessary that the smallest actions should be regulated; and none can be neglected without the soul, which must give an account of all, suffering notable injury.—**SURIN.**

*One pur-
pose.*

*Resur-
rection.*

LXXVII.

“**C**ONSIDER the lilies of the field.’ We must take our Lord’s words exactly. He is speaking of the lilies, the bulbous plants which spring into flowers in countless thousands every spring over the downs of Eastern lands. All the winter they are dead, unsightly roots, hidden in the earth. But no sooner does the sun of spring shine upon their graves, than they rise into sudden life and beauty, as it pleases God, and every seed takes its own peculiar body. Sown in corruption, they are raised in incorruption ; sown in weakness, they are raised in power ; sown in dishonour, they are raised in glory ; delicate, beautiful in colour, perfuming the air with fragrance : types of immortality, fit for the crowns of angels.

“Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow.” For even so is the Resur-

rection of the dead. Yes, not without a divine providence—yea, a divine inspiration—has the blessed Eastertide been fixed by the Church of all ages, as the season when the earth shakes off her winter's sleep ; when the birds come back, and the flowers begin to bloom, when every seed which falls into the ground and dies, and rises again with a new body, is a witness to us of the Resurrection of Christ ; and a witness too, that we shall rise again ; that in us, as in it, life shall conquer death ; when every bird that comes back to sing and build among us, every flower that blows, is a witness to us of the Resurrection of the Lord and of our Resurrection. . . The resurrection of the earth from her winter's sleep, commemorates to us, as each blessed Eastertide comes round, the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and is a witness to us that some day life

*Resur-
rection.*

*Resur-
rection.*

shall conquer death, light conquer darkness, righteousness conquer sin, joy conquer grief; when the whole creation, which groaneth and travaileth in pain until now, shall have brought forth that of which it travaileth in labour, even the new heaven and the new earth, wherein shall be neither sighing nor sorrow, but God shall wipe away tears from all eyes.—C. KINGSLEY.

LXXVIII.

Eternity.

ETERNITY is rather the quality of timelessness, than a quantity of time. It is out of, and above, and beneath, and behind time. It does not go on for ever, but it always is, and to introduce into it the temporal notions of after and before, is like attempting to cut water with an axe. It is measured by its intensity, not by its extension.—J. R. ILLINGWORTH.

*" Rubies ! . . . In childish days
I felt as if they were alive and breathed.*

. . . I was right !

*The gems have life in them. Their colours
speak,*

*Say what words fail of. So do many things:
The scent of jasmine, and the fountain's
splash,*

*The moving shadows on the far-off hills,
The slanting moonlight on our clasping
hands.*

*O Situa ! there's an ocean round our words
That overflows and drowns them. Do you
know*

*Sometimes when we sit silent, and the air
Breathes gently on us from the orange trees,
It seems that with the whisper of a word
Our souls must 'shrink,' get poorer, more
apart.*

s it not true ?"

" Yes, dearest, it is true.

*Speech is but broken light upon the depth
Of the unspoken."*



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